

**REMARKS**

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the present application in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

***Status of the Claims***

In the present Amendment, claims 17 and 18 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contain therein, and Applicants reserve the right to file any divisional application based on such canceled subject matter. Claims 1-4 and 6-16 are pending in the present application. These claims are allowed as stated in paragraph 2 and on the PTOL-326 form of the outstanding Office Action (Applicants note that the Office Action at page 2 refers to claims 1-4 and 6-15, which appears to be in error).

Based upon the above considerations, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

***Ex Parte Quayle***

The outstanding Office Action indicates *Ex Parte Quayle* practice is in effect, wherein prosecution on the merits is closed. Claims 17-18, which have been determined to be drawn to a non-elected invention, have been canceled. Thereby, no issues remain and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance issue for the present case.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Eugene T. Perez (Reg. No. 48,501)

**Application No. 10/609,402**

**Docket No.: 0020-5147P**

**Art Unit 2879**

**Reply to Office Action of January 2, 2008**

at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 8, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Andrew D. Meikle

Registration No.: 32,868

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road, Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant